



Office Locations:
Newark, Dover, Georgetown

DELAWARE MANUFACTURING EXTENSION PARTNERSHIP (DEMEP)
Serving firms throughout Delaware with 3 offices. Affiliated with: Delaware Technical & Community College, Delaware Economic Development Office, and Delaware State Chamber of Commerce. Contact: DEMEP, 400 Stanton-Christiana Rd., Suite A-158, Newark, DE 19713, (302) 283-3131, Fax: (302) 283-3137, Website: <http://www.demep.org/>

THE MANUFACTURING EXTENSION PARTNERSHIP IN DELAWARE

Manufacturing Extension Partnership (MEP) is a nationwide system of services and support for smaller manufacturers to become more globally competitive. At the heart of the system is a network of affiliated, locally-based manufacturing extension centers. Each center, like DEMEP, is a partnership, typically involving federal, state, and local governments; industry; educational institutions; and other sources of expertise, information and funding support.

C O M P A N Y C L I P S

ILC Dover Takes Lean Manufacturing "Out of This World"

ILC Dover, Inc., located in Frederica, Delaware and employing less than 500 people, manufactures products ranging from advertising blimps to components of space suits. Gloves are the most complicated single component of a space suit and the most difficult to fabricate because astronauts need considerable manual dexterity. The National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA)'s increase in its mission and shuttle astronaut complement required ILC Dover to triple its production of space suit gloves; however, output was limited by the availability of production space and expert, highly trained sewers.

The Delaware Manufacturing Extension Partnership (DEMEP) designed a plan for ILC Dover based on its "Pathways to Success" model. DEMEP designed the plan specifically to help the company identify opportunities for improvement, develop and design an implementation plan, provide training for both management and production workers, and implement the plan. Everyone who worked on the gloves—from management and engineers to production personnel—received on-site training. DEMEP helped ILC Dover focus on the manufacturing processes with the greatest potential to eliminate production delays and bottlenecks.

Improvement also required a paradigm shift at the plant. Focus is now on productivity, and recruitment of new personnel has become more selective. Overall, ILC reduced its labor hours in glove production by nearly 40 percent, with some components realizing labor savings as high as 75 percent. Product quality has shown significant improvement. Based on the success of its glove department, ILC Dover plans to implement process improvements in other areas of space suit production and related non-production functions.

Continued

STATE STATS

DATA* COVERS JANUARY TO DECEMBER 2001

Number of projects completed
with firms
60

Number of firms served
31

Number of firms served for
the first time
7

Federal cost share for current
operating year
\$302,400

State/other cost share for current
operating year
\$604,800

**Data as reported from center*

DATA** COVERS JANUARY TO DECEMBER 2001

Increased sales & retained sales
\$3,825,000

Client capital investment
\$9,468,500

Total cost savings
\$1,802,000

Job (created & retained)
111

***Source: Independent client impact survey*



Associates Graphic Services Boots Quality, Volume, & Customer Satisfaction

Associates Graphic Services (AGS) is a 42-employee commercial printer located in Wilmington, Delaware, the first to introduce digital technology to the Delaware commercial printing industry. While this state-of-the-art technology gave AGS a clear advantage over its competitors, the company neglected to address productivity issues.

Using its “Pathways to Success” model, the Delaware Manufacturing Extension Partnership (DEMPEP) identified areas of improvement and developed an action plan for AGS. The DEMPEP trained AGS employees in methods of improving efficiency, measured and identified areas for improvement within the production and information flows, established a vision for the future, and developed a plan to achieve that vision. Using the DEMPEP’s roadmap, AGS began implementing its action plan, focusing on the pre-press area of the business.

By making the DEMPEP’s recommended changes, AGS increased its production volumes by 15 percent over the first year following implementation. The company also reduced its revenue cycle from an average of 37 days to 23 days, and made more efficient use of materials to further reduce costs.